

TOWN HALL, ST. HELENS.

SATURDAY, OCT. 16th, 1909.



MR. THOMAS BEECHAM,
CONDUCTOR.

Beecham Orchestra

SIGNOR TAMINI,
TENOR.

MISS
KATHLEEN PARLOW,
VIOLINIST.

Tour Direction



Messrs. Baring Bros.

PROGRAMME

WORDS OF SONGS



ANALYTICAL NOTES



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Gloucestershire Historical Pageant, 1908.

Bath Historical Pageant, 1909.

Chester Historical Pageant, 1910.

PROGRAMME

Overture ... "Carnaval Romain" ... *Berlioz*
BEECHAM ORCHESTRA.

Aria "Vesti la giubba" (Pagliacci) *Leoncavallo*
(On with the Molley.)
SIGNOR TAMINI.

Fantasie ... "Byron" ... *Holbrooke*
BEECHAM ORCHESTRA.

Concerto for Violin with Orchestra ... *Max Bruch*
MISS KATHLEEN PARLOW.

Serenade for Viola and Orchestra ... *Hugo Wolf*
MR. LIONEL TERTIS.

Song ... Lohengrin's Farewell (Lohengrin) ...
Wagner
SIGNOR TAMINI.

Interval of 10 Minutes.

Suite ... Peer Gynt ... *Grieg*
BEECHAM ORCHESTRA.

Overture ... Tannhauser ... *Wagner*
BEECHAM ORCHESTRA.

Conductor = = **Mr. THOMAS BEECHAM.**

Accompanist - - **Mr. EDWARD AGATE.**

Descriptive Notes By E. MARKHAM LEE, M.A.
D. Mus. Cantab.

*Hector Berlioz ... Overture "Le Carnaval
Romain" (Op. 9).*

This work is constructed, so far as its main themes are concerned, from the Finale of the second act of the composer's opera, "Bensenuto Cellini." The opera deals with a story of Rome at carnival time, and largely concerns itself with gay and brilliant scenes of Rome in festive guise. Not proving specially successful in its original shape, the composer has preserved some of the music by arranging it in this concert form, and thus it adds to the number of picturesque musical paintings describing the joys and delights of carnival.

Nearly the whole overture is in the form of a Tarantella, and with this idea the orchestra makes a bright and bustling commencement, but this is soon seen to be only a prelude to a slow section. The key of C is soon quitted for that of E, where the violas take up the melody. When it next comes (in A, the key of the overture) the 'cellos and wood-wind soar through it with resonant note. The rhythmic devices in the accompaniment at this point are most interesting, especially in the brass and percussion. Two tambourines and a triangle are made use of in this department, and the whole score is effectively laid out. The music becomes more animated as we proceed, and after some rushing scales in the wind-instruments we return to 6-8 time and the springing lilt of the dance rhythm.

We now arrive at the main subject of the overture, all before this having been preludial and introductory. Daintily and with muted strings the violins trip through it.

At first all is delicate and fairy-like, but soon mutes are removed and with a loud outburst a similar theme in the key of G is announced.

The bright festive note sounded in these phrases is kept up with amazing vigour and spirit. There is much rapid repetition of the melodies already quoted, a persistent rhythm of pulsating notes being adhered to. As we proceed there is some development of ideas, and more sustained fragments of melody appear in the bassoons and the brass. But the joyous feeling refuses to be for long kept in the background and quickly drowns some brief attempts at learned imitations. Recapitulation of the two subjects lead to a bright busy Coda, and all comes to an end in an exhilarating vivacious manner.

Leoncavallo ... "Vesta la giubba" ... ("Pagliacci")

Vesta la giubba e la faccia infarina,
La gente paga rider vuole qua,
E se Arlecchin t'invola Colombina,
Ridi, Pagliaccio, e ognun applaudira.

Tramuta in lazzi lo spasmo ed il pipnto ;
In una smorfia il singhiozzo e'l dolor !
Ah !: Ridi, Pagliaccio, sul tuo amore infranto.
Ridi del dulo che t'avvelena il cor !

TRANSLATION.

To act, with my heart maddened with sorrow,
I know not what I'm saying or what I'm doing,
Yet I must face it. Courage, my heart !
Thou art not a man ; thou'rt but a jester !

On with the motley, the paint and the powder,
The people pay thee, and want their laugh, you know ;
If Harlequin thy Columbine has stolen,
Laugh, Punchinello ! The world will cry " Bravo ! "
Go hide with laughter thy tears and thy sorrow,
Sing and be merry, playing thy part,
Laugh, Punchinello, for the love that is ended,
Laugh for the sorrow that is eating thy heart.

F. E. WEATHERLY.

Joseph Holbrooke. Tone Poem "Byron," No. 6 (Op. 39)

This tone-poem for orchestra (with ad libitum chorus) is based upon words by Keats. As is usual with Mr. Holbrooke's pieces, a large orchestra is required, with a special number of wind instruments.

The work opens with a Larghetto in C major of solemn chords, which soon give way to a syncopated melody of an expressive nature. Later on this becomes more impassioned and is accompanied by triplets, and the formerly simple nature of the music now merges into the chromatic. The triplet movement is long continued, but at length comes to a *panissimo* ending, and a broad subject in the key of E flat major is presented. After some working this returns with some extra and delicate features in the way of decorative passages for flute and clarinet.

A climax is now reached with an animated and vigorous passage which leads us back to the key of C, and a resumption of the original ideas of the tone-poem. There is much charm in the rapidly moving accompaniments which now set off the chief theme, while the second theme is in its turn repeated in C major, again with triplet accompaniment. A number of delicate passages for flutes and clarinets in thirds and sixths usher in a *panissimo* ending, so far as the orchestral portion of the work is concerned, although when a chorus is present it now takes part in a vocal Coda based on the same ideas. The tone-poem "Byron" was published in 1904, and was first performed at Leeds by the Choral Union in that year.

Max Bruch Concerto in G minor.

1. Vorspiel Allegro Moderato. 2. Adagio. 3. Finale allegro energico

Max Bruch is one of the oldest living composers whose works are, by common consent, regarded as classics. He was born in Cologne in 1838, and after following his early bent in the direction of opera, without succeeding in making his ideas appreciated, turned his attention to large choral works with orchestra, on which his claim to greatness fittingly rests. With us, however, he is best known as a composer by his first violin concerto, written while he was musical director at Coblenz, between 1865 and 1867, a few of his wonderful male choruses, and the beautiful adaption of the old Hebrew melody, "Kol Nidrei" for the 'cello. Max Bruch was in England for some three years, when he was appointed conductor of Liverpool Philharmonic Society, after the death of Sir Julius Benedict.

The breadth and thoughtfulness of the composer's melody is clearly marked in this G Minor Concerto, one which, dedicated to the master-violinist, Joachim, has always been a favourite alike with violinists and the public. The characteristic points which mark it as great among all modern Concertos for the violin are, first, its spontaneous melodic structure and the intimate knowledge it reveals in dealing with the technic of the solo instrument.

The vigorous opening theme of the first movement is preceded by some preludial passages of more than the usual length, closely resembling cadenzas, in fact. The second theme is a clever continuation of the first, and it flows along with great charm and movement. To the accompaniment—or, rather, the constructional background—is given, shortly after, an important episode in place of the recapitulation customary in the older works of the kind. The introduction is then utilised again with excellent effect.

The first movement is planned to lead straight into the second, a tender and most expressive adagio, in which the beautiful melody is contrasted most skilfully against little phrases of accompaniment which assume importance as the Movement proceeds. A tributary theme is next announced in the bass of the accompaniment, while above it the solo instrument plays graceful and brilliant triplet passages which reveal a marked characteristic of the composer, in that they have melodic as well as decorative beauties.

The spirited finale begins with an introduction in which the strongly marked rhythms of the themes employed are indicated in this exhilarating section, so effectively concluding a work of vigour and charm, is Hungarian in manner and feeling. There are two main themes, divided by a characteristic "triplet" episode. By the concise "summing-up" towards the end the interest is maintained throughout with great vivacity.

Hugo Wolf ... *Italian Serenade.*

This Serenade by Hugo Wolf—best known, perhaps, in England as a composer of many original songs—was written for a small orchestra, and afterwards transcribed by him as a String Quartet. It is an exquisite study in miniature, and the typical serenade effects (fancifully imagined "lute" accompaniments to simple melodies) are presented in artistic but unconventional forms.

Commencing in the key of G with a simple accompaniment of chords, a melody soon appears on the solo viola and is continued by a phrase of which the rhythm afterwards is much in evidence. The light bass accompaniment heard at the outset continues persistently, but is so skilfully employed as to prevent any feeling of monotony. After some extension of these ideas the music passes into six-eight time, presenting a change of rhythm together with some original and uncommon harmonies for the wood-wind, the scoring here being more full. A new theme (still in the key of G) is now utilized.

When the original melody returns it is in conjunction with several counter-themes. For sometime development of these is heard, and then at length we escape from the key of G and are treated to a new idea in the well-removed tonality of F sharp minor—the accompaniments to which are clever and fresh. This concludes the new matter, which is now skilfully manipulated, returning to the opening theme and the key of G for the fanciful and delicate coda.

Wagner. “Lohengrin’s Farewell.”

My trusty swan!

Oh that this summons ne’er had been!

Oh that this day I ne’er had seen!

I thought the year soon would be o’er,

When thy probation would have passed;

Then, by the Grail’s transcendent pow’r,

In thy true shape we’d meet at last!

O Elsa, think what joys thy doubts have ended!

Couldst thou not trust in me for one short year?

Then thy dear brother, whom the Grail defended,

In life and honour thou hadst welcomed here.

If he returns when our sweet ties are broken,

This horn, this sword and ring give him in token;

His arm will conquer when the sword he raises,

This horn will aid him in the hour of need,

This ring shall mind him who did most befriend him—

Of me, who saved thee from the depths of woe;

Farewell! Farewell! Farewell!! my love, my wife,

Farewell! Henceforth the Grail commands my life.

Farewell! Farewell!

Grieg... Suite "Peer Gynt" Op. 46.

The death of Henrik Ibsen is fresh in our memories to-day. Of his many important dramatic works, "Peer Gynt" is not one of the best known, at any rate in this country. It was on his own initiative that the author of this play sought the help of his compatriot for the clothing of certain scenes in musical raiment, and in a letter dated January 23rd, 1874, printed in extenso in Mr. H. T. Finch's new biography of Grieg, we have Ibsen's own interesting statement of his wishes to the composer.

The outcome of this co-operation is known to music lovers, not so much by its original dramatic version but by the two fascinating orchestral suites which Grieg arranged from his incidental music. The original production of the play was at Bergen on February 24th, 1876, and some twelve years later the four most popular numbers were issued as a suite. A second suite, issued later on, scarcely compares in charm with the earlier one.

The four numbers constituting the first suite are thus named :—

- (a) "Morning Mood."
- (b) "The death of Asa."
- (c) "Anitra's Dance."
- (d) "In the Hall of the Dwarfs."

The gentle picture of sunrise is happily illustrated by a most suave and flowing melody in the key of E, which possesses a contour of delicate charm. The twittering of birds and soft sounds of nature are represented with subtle skill, constituting a tone-poem of rich colour and fanciful invention.

The "Death of Asa" presents us with a picture of different shade the poignant harmonies, essentially pathetic, finely exposing the mood. Originality in chord and cadence is in this number cleverly displayed.

"Anitra's Dance" is a dainty mazurka-like number, depicting the graceful dancing of the Bedouin's daughter. With perfect freedom and individuality Grieg here employs, most happily, devices of canon and imitation, and the scoring is of undeniable charm.

Humour enters into the constitution of the last of the set, and the ponderous tread of the dwarfs is cleverly and quaintly represented. The movement is a perpetual crescendo, and it ends with a clamour that brings the work to a most exhilarating conclusion.

Wagner ... Overture "Tannhauser."

The delight which Wagner experienced on the first production of "Tannhauser" at Dresden on October 19th, 1845, was followed by the keen disappointment of the discovery that it was even less intelligible to the general public than the "Flying Dutchman," which had seen the light two years previously. The reason for this, to put it briefly, was that the essential part of the work—the attempt to cut adrift from the conventional opera-form—went entirely without appreciation.

The story of Tannhauser, the knight who sets out to take part in the song-contest at the Wartburg, and who fell a prey to the allurements of the goddess of love, is the subject of an old German folk-song. Wagner found it most probably in Ludwig Bechstein's book on Thuringian folk-lore. In North German mythology is found one of many traces of old Pagan beliefs in the connection between Holda (the goddess of love) and Venus. She was supposed to have taken up her abode under the Horselberg, and in the original tale Tannhauser, after he has thrown off his enchantment, finds that his wife has destroyed herself when he returns home.

Wagner appears to have utilized another version of the legend in Hoffman's "*Der Kampf der Sanger*," and with the early thirteenth century story of the "*Wartburgkrieg*" he welded his own drama together with the certain skill of the poet. Historically, of course, the striving of the Minnesingers was one of poetry rather than music.

In view of the later development of Wagner's aims and ideas, it is possible to regard the book rather than the music of this opera as showing progress towards lyric-drama. Be that as it may, it is impossible to pass over the high merits of the Overture—even allowing for the influence of Weber—as a marvellously skilful employment of material. It long remained as the most popular excerpt from the whole of the master's music available for concert performance, and even to-day it holds its own place by reason of its melodic richness. It may be regarded as a compilation of the chief themes of the opera it preludes, but it scarcely requires Wagner's own explanation to see that it represents the struggle between gross sensuality and pure love as typified in Venus and Elizabeth.

At the beginning of the Overture, clarinets, horns, and bassons announce the grave Pilgrims' Chant, and the 'cellos

afterwards proceed to the second phrase—a very striking continuation—of this well-known melody. As the fuller treatment comes into play, the very characteristic figure in the violins assumes prominence—one which, Wagner tells us, is meant to indicate the pulse of life or the healthy natural instincts of man. In quick and most effective contrast comes the lascivious charm of the abode of Love, shown in dance-measures of the most voluptuous character. After a love-song from Tannhauser, the presence of Venus is revealed in a kind of hymn, which works up from a species of call (on the clarinet) to a rich fullness. The madly intoxicating dances continue, much use being made of modifications of the curious violin figure to which attention has been called. As the dawn is supposed to break, the Pilgrims' Chant comes once more peacefully from the distance, and the final salvation of Tannhauser by the redeeming love of Elizabeth brings the Overture to a fitting conclusion.



Prog - 152

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